

Department of Human Services

Prepared by the
DHS Office of
Communications
(517) 373-7394



Articles in Today's Clips Friday, August 4, 2006

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Child Abuse/Neglect/Protection	2-12
Juvenile Justice	13-17
Health Care	18-20
Domestic Violence	21
Child Custody	22-23
Charities	24
Midnight Golf	25-27
Minimum Wage	28-34

*Important story at this spot



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published August 4, 2006

Girl, 9, fatally shot as kids play with gun

Police call shooting accidental; children, families were friends

Associated Press

GRANT TWP. - A 9-year-old girl died after being shot in the chest by a teenage friend while the pair played with a loaded handgun, authorities say.

A preliminary investigation from Wednesday's shooting shows that Johanna Gale was accidentally killed by a 13-year-old boy at his home in Oceana County's Grant Township, state police told The Muskegon Chronicle.

The boy called 911, and Johanna, of Oceana County's Shelby Township, was rushed to Hackley Lakeshore Hospital, where she died.

An autopsy was to be performed Thursday, Michigan State Police Sgt. Mike Cookenmaster said.

Police said the boy and girl were friends, as were their parents. Both families are members of the same church in Rothbury, where a special prayer service was being arranged.

Cathy and Matt Gale said they don't harbor any anger or resentment toward the boy or his parents. Cathy Gale said they are longtime family friends, and she understands how much they must be suffering.

"My heart bleeds for his mom and him," said Cathy Gale, who added that she intends to reach out to the boy and his family.

Cathy Gale said her family's Christian faith is giving them strength. She said they believe their daughter is with God.

"She was a gift from God," she said. "He gave her to us, and whatever plans he had for her on this earth, she fulfilled."

Matt Gale said he can't question why his daughter was taken so young.

"Our faith teaches us (God) is in control of every aspect of our lives."



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published August 4, 2006

Lansing man arrested in 1-year-old daughter's death

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

The father of a 1-year-old girl who died Wednesday is expected to be arraigned today in connection with her death.

The Lansing man's name is not being released because he has not been charged. He was arrested Wednesday night.

Paramedics took the girl to Sparrow Hospital on Wednesday afternoon after picking her up from her home, police Lt. Bruce Ferguson said. She was pronounced dead at the hospital.

Police then were called to the hospital at about 5:30 p.m. to investigate a suspicious death. After detectives interviewed family members and other witnesses, "we put enough together to make an arrest," Ferguson said.

An autopsy is expected to be completed today.

The girl lived with her mother and father, Ferguson said. She did not have any siblings.

The girl's mother is not expected to be charged, police said.

Copyright 2006 Lansing State Journal Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service (updated 12.20.02)

[\[Back\]](#)

Ludington Daily News

Posted: 8-3-2006

Accidental shooting claims life of Oceana County girl

By RONDA HOWELL

Shoreline Media Writer

SHELBY — When Matt and Cathy Gale talk about their daughter, 9-year-old Johanna Grace Gale, they emphasize the grace she brought to their world and to her community.



Johanna was accidentally shot Wednesday by a 13-year-old boy, a close friend, as the two were playing with a small-caliber handgun in Oceana County's Grant Township. Michigan State Police reported they were called to the scene about 2 p.m. Johanna was taken by ambulance to Hackley Lakeshore Hospital where she died a short time after her arrival.

This morning, Cathy said their daughter was "a big bundle of joy" for everyone around her.

"Her middle name was Grace and she brought grace to everyone she came into contact with," said Cathy. "She was born into a blended family. Matt had two children. I had two children. Johanna came five years after we were married. Matt has always said Johanna was the mortar between the bricks. She belonged to everybody."

Cathy said Johanna was a child full of joy, who loved singing, being outdoors and animals.

"We have a guinea pig who was the classroom pet and Johanna was keeping for the summer," said her mom with a chuckle. "She was always bringing home an animal of one type or another." Johanna also was a songwriter, said her father.

One of her songs was put to music and sung by children from their church, Rothbury Community Church.

Matt said the comfort of their faith is carrying them through the anguish of losing their youngest child.

"God gives us a certain number of days, even before we are conceived," said Matt. "Johanna could never understand why people didn't love Christ the way she did. She would want everyone to know Jesus as their best friend the way she did."

A special prayer service was held on Wednesday evening for the Gale family, and the family of the teen who accidentally shot Johanna, who also attend the church.

"We love them," said Cathy. "They were best friends. They played every day. His mom was Johanna's Sunday School teacher." The accident happened near the store Mac's Meats in Grant Township, owned by the Gale family.

No services have been set, pending an autopsy, which was to be performed today, said Matt. Arrangements will be made through Harris Funeral Home.

Johanna would have been entering third grade at Thomas Read Elementary School in Shelby.

In addition to her parents and grandparents, Doug and Thelma Gale and Robert and Karen Oberlin; aunts and uncles and many friends, Johanna is survived by her siblings, Sarah, 17; Brad, 19; Chris, 23 and Heather, 23.

The boy called 911, and Johanna was rushed to Hackley Lakeshore Hospital, where she died.

[Post a Comment](#)

Date published: 8-3-2006

? 2002 Ludington Daily News.



Muskegon Chronicle

Johanna, shooter were inseparable

Friday, August 04, 2006

By Dave LeMieux

CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

What began as a perfectly ordinary summer afternoon turned tragic after 9-year-old Johanna Gale and her best friend bustled out the side door of her father's butcher shop on Wednesday.

"They were going over to his house to play," said Gale's maternal grandfather Robert Oberlin, as he trimmed meat in the shop early Thursday morning.

"They were good friends," Oberlin said. "He was here all the time."

Gale died following a handgun accident about 2 p.m., shortly after Oberlin watched the pair leave the butcher shop on Wednesday.

The boy's mother works at a bakery which shares space with Mac's Meats. The boy's family lives a few doors away.

The Gales visited the boy and his family on Thursday.

They have been devastated by the tragic accident, father Matt Gale said.

"I've got a tremendous amount of pain and a tremendous hole in my heart right now but I cannot imagine what he's going to have to deal with and what his mom and dad are going to have to deal with," Gale said.

Gale said he told the family that, "No matter what, we love them and didn't blame them."

Gale said he wrapped the sobbing boy in hug and told him the accident was part of God's plan.

"We told him God has a divine plan and if it happened to be you or Johanna riding out into traffic on her bike or falling out of the tree house we're building, God was in control.

"He knew what was going to happen and has something really big planned for you and your family and our family and everyone who has been touched by this or He wouldn't have let it happen," Gale said.

Gale said the boy and his family don't need anyone negative getting in their faces.

"They need people to come around them that know and love them who can support them," Gale said.

The bullet that killed Johanna Gale missed her heart, her father said, his voice cracking, and will be donated to an organ bank.

"Maybe a miracle can come out of this tragedy," he said.

Johanna and the boy were an unlikely pair who were nearly inseparable.

Thrown together by circumstances, Gale and the boy quickly became fast friends, Oberlin said.

The children first met a couple years ago when Johanna's father, Matt Gale, bought Mac's Meats, Oberlin said.

The lives of two families quickly became entwined after Matt Gale bought the shop.

In addition to working together, the families attend the same church.

Since there were no other children in the neighborhood, Johanna and the boy, who was a few years older, became close friends, Oberlin said.

"She was here by herself and he was here by himself -- they were just good buddies," Oberlin said.

The two spent this summer together riding bikes and recently built a fort, complete with a footbridge, in a swampy area near the butcher shop, Oberlin said.

"There was a lot of tree climbing in the willow tree here," he said.

Johanna was an outgoing girl, according to former Sunday school teacher Kay Schmidt.

"She was a very happy young girl -- always had a heart for everybody," Schmidt said. "After she left my Sunday school class, she always said 'Hi' and gave me hugs.

"A lot of people loved her."

©2006 Muskegon Chronicle

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

Father Accused Of Sexual Conduct With Daughter

Police Are Investigating

POSTED: 3:51 pm EDT August 3, 2006

A local father could be jailed for alleged criminal sexual conduct against his daughter. James Her, of Lyon Township, allegedly sexually assaulted his 5-year-old daughter and her 3-year-old playmate, Local 4 reported.

Deputies responded to a possible assault complaint at the Country Estates Mobile Home Park.

Her was also convicted of kidnapping and rape 30 years ago and served 10 years in prison.

Her is in police custody. Police are investigating.

Copyright 2006 by ClickOnDetroit.com.

Detroit Free Press

NEWS IN A MINUTE: Macomb County

August 4, 2006

CLINTON TOWNSHIP: Oakland Township man is arraigned in sex sting

An Oakland Township man was arraigned Thursday in 41-B District Court on charges stemming from an alleged attempt to meet who he thought was an underage girl for sex.

Brian E. Froh, 19, was arrested Wednesday. Police said he drove to Macomb County expecting to meet the girl but was instead met by police.

Froh was charged with two counts of child sexually abusive activity, two counts of using a computer in the commission of a crime and one count of accosting a child for immoral purposes. He is being held in lieu of \$20,000 bond.

Police said Froh met who he thought was a 13-year-old girl in an Internet chat room, but he was actually talking with a member of the Macomb Area Computer Enforcement team.

They agreed to meet at an undisclosed location in Macomb County. When Froh arrived Wednesday, he was arrested.

Froh did not enter a plea and is due back in court Aug. 15 for a preliminary exam.



More child abuse charges filed against sex offender

Of The Oakland Press

LYON TWP. - A 51-year-old man who served 10 years in prison for a kidnapping/rape conviction in 1977 has been arraigned on a charge of sexually assaulting a preschool girl.

And now authorities are investigating a charge that he molested another preschooler.

Authorities said James Gerard Herr, 51, was never listed on the state's sex offender registry after the conviction because the registry law was not yet in effect.

The girl's mother notified deputies of the complaint against Herr, who has denied the allegations.

Oakland County Sheriff's deputies arrested him after issuing a be-on-the-lookout alert for him after questioning the alleged victim's mother.

Herr was charged in 52-1 District Court earlier this week with one count of second-degree criminal sexual conduct. He is being held on \$750,000 bond.

Herr was sentenced in 1977 to 10-20 years in prison. He was released in 1987. According to Michigan Department of Corrections records, he then was convicted and sentenced to five years for an uttering and publishing charge in Wayne County. He was released in 2003 after serving five years on that charge.

Authorities say Herr could face additional charges. Another mother has come forward to officials with allegations that Herr could have molested another young girl. An interview with the girl is scheduled at the Care House, where child sex victims are

interviewed by authorities.

That allegation remains under investigation.

Click here to return to story:

http://www.theoaklandpress.com/stories/080406/loc_2006080402.shtml



— THE — ANN ARBOR NEWS

Teen caught after escape from county juvenile center

Friday, August 04, 2006

BY AMALIE NASH

News Staff Reporter

A 15-year-old boy was recaptured Thursday night, one day after he scaled a courtyard wall and jumped from a roof to escape from the Washtenaw County Juvenile Detention Center, authorities said.

The escape occurred around 9 p.m. Wednesday, the same day the boy was ordered to return to the W.J. Maxey Boys Training School, where he previously served time for a robbery and car theft, police said. By 8 p.m. Thursday, police had found him at a home in Superior Township, Washtenaw County Sheriff's Cmdr. Dave Egeler said.

The teen, Kenneth Roy Jackson III of Ypsilanti Township, was expected to face escape charges.

Egeler said Jackson was in the courtyard, which is surrounded by walls, when he scaled an inner wall and ran across the roof of the facility in the 4100 block of Washtenaw Avenue. The center is across a parking lot from the sheriff's department, but is operated by the juvenile court and has separate security.

Jackson was 14 years old in July 2005 when he was accused of stealing a customer's car at an Ypsilanti Township pizzeria and fleeing with the vehicle and several items inside, Egeler said. He was convicted and served time at the Maxey facility in Green Oak Township but earned an early release, Egeler said.

While on probation, Jackson is accused of fleeing from sheriff's deputies on July 1, Egeler said. He was arrested and lodged at the juvenile center until a hearing Wednesday, when he was found to be in violation of his probation and ordered to return to Maxey, Egeler said.

Several escapes have occurred at the juvenile detention center since it opened in 2003. The first escape occurred in June 2005 when a 16-year-old inmate also scaled the wall and jumped off the roof; his father brought him back the next day. Two weeks later, several juveniles - including that same boy - crawled up a ceiling, but weren't able to get out.

In September 2005, two teenagers escaped when they were returning to the facility from an outside drug treatment session.

©2006 Ann Arbor News

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

Lansing State Journal

August 4, 2006

Couple arrested in bank robberies

INDEPENDENCE TWP. - Police say a married couple robbed two banks and used their four children as a cover for their getaways.

Michael Carter, 43, and Aretha Carter, 31, are charged with armed robbery, bank robbery and attempted armed robbery.

Investigators say Aretha Carter told them her husband ordered her to "load the van up with the kids" because he planned to rob banks.

Both times, Michael Carter is accused of robbing the bank, and his wife is accused of driving the getaway car. The children, ages 7 to 12, are in the care of a relative.

- From staff and wire reports

Suspect Escapes From Juvenile Center

Authorities Say Teen Scaled Wall, Fled Across Roof

POSTED: 2:45 pm EDT August 3, 2006

A teen who escaped from a juvenile facility is wanted by authorities.

Kenneth Roy Jackson III escaped from the Washtenaw County Juvenile Detention Center on Washtenaw Avenue at about 9 p.m. on Wednesday, according to the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department. Authorities said Jackson escaped by scaling an inner courtyard wall and fleeing across the roof of the facility.

Jackson was in the center on a violation of probation charge and was recently scheduled to return to the Maxey Training School for the violation, the sheriff's department reported. The boy's original conviction was based on a carjacking and armed robbery incident that occurred in July 2005, authorities said.

The teen (pictured) is described as 5 feet 4 inches tall, 135 pounds and was last seen wearing a gray T-shirt, blue shorts and a yellow sweatshirt.

Anyone with information to his whereabouts should contact the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department at 734-971-3954 or Crime Stoppers at 800-SPEAK-UP.

Copyright 2006 by ClickOnDetroit.com.

Teen Accepts Responsibility For Oxford High Fire

POSTED: 8:25 am EDT August 4, 2006

UPDATED: 9:04 am EDT August 4, 2006

A teen accused of burning down the maintenance garage at Oxford High School now accepts responsibility for the crime.

Joel Mason Thomas, 16, will be sentenced in Juvenile Court later this month.

He will be charged with arson and breaking and entering.

Investigators found assembled bombs, explosive chemicals, and blueprints of the school in the teen's home.

Prosecutors are also expected to file terrorism charges against Thomas next week.

Copyright 2006 by ClickOnDetroit.com.



KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

Children need a new Juvenile Home

Friday, August 4, 2006

The need is real.

The price is right.

That's why we urge Kalamazoo County voters to approve a property tax increase to build a new county juvenile home.

Part of the existing facility, which is 70 years old, was designed to house orphans. Even the new wing, built 40 years ago, is aging and inadequate.

There is little space. Children requiring intensive treatment are now shipped out to other counties or states that have beds for the programs the children need.

It is unsafe. It is not secure. Two teens, one of whom is facing a charge of attempted murder, escaped from the juvenile home in June. They saw an open window in an office on the second floor -- open because of a lack of adequate ventilation on a hot day -- and it only took a minute for them to run for it and dive out head-first. One of the teens was at large for two weeks.

Kalamazoo County has been in need of a new juvenile home for years.

Unfortunately, past requests to voters to authorize a property tax increase for a new facility were twice combined with other big-ticket projects.

In 2002, the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners asked voters to approve a justice campus that included a new juvenile home, new jail and new court buildings at a cost of \$148 million. Voters said no way to that Cadillac of a plan.

Last year, commissioners scaled back the tax increase request to \$91.5 million for a new juvenile home and expansion of the overcrowded county jail. Voters rejected that, too.

This time, commissioners realized voters would be more likely to approve a request for a better facility to house delinquent children if it were not tied to spending for jail improvement. Also, the increase would pay for the new structure, not programs.

Tuesday's proposal for a \$28.3 million juvenile home would be much easier on most families' pocketbooks. It would raise property taxes by 0.2654 in 2007 and an estimated 0.1728, on average, for up to 25 years. On a home with a market value of \$138,310 and a taxable value of \$56,991 -- the average value of homes in Kalamazoo County -- the tax increase would cost about \$15 the first year.

We believe that's a small price to pay for something that could be of such enormous value to young lives -- and ultimately to the community at large.

Early intervention and proper treatment of young offenders who are taking their first steps on the way to a life of crime can steer them off a self-destructive path and onto the right road.

Please vote ``yes" for a new juvenile home Tuesday.

©2006 Kalamazoo

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

Kalamazoo Gazette Letters

Friday, August 4, 2006

Support millage for Juvenile Home

About 16 years ago, leaders from throughout the county determined the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home should be replaced. On Aug. 8, voters will determine whether that need is finally addressed.

The Juvenile Home is a place where our community strives to restore the lives of our most damaged kids. It provides our community an opportunity to prevent these kids from entering the adult justice system.

Few people know that the Juvenile Home operates two schools within its crumbling walls -- a community-based school and a school for residents of the home. Both schools work to change the lives of our troubled youth, in a facility partially built in 1936 as an orphanage.

The citizens of Kalamazoo County have a great tradition of investing in kids. Please continue that tradition by voting ``Yes" on Aug. 8, for 0.26 mills to rebuild the Juvenile Home.

Carol and Daniel McGlinn

Kalamazoo

Medicare funding rules change

Most hospitals will get payment boost

BY KEVIN FREKING

ASSOCIATED PRESS

August 4, 2006

Hospitals will get more money for treating the sickest of Medicare patients and less for treating some of the healthier ones under new federal regulations issued this week.

The changes are designed to more accurately reflect hospital costs and reduce incentives for hospitals to treat only the most profitable patients, said Mark McClellan, administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The new rules become effective for patients discharged on or after Oct. 1.

Some health care providers had feared that the payment revisions would lead to a substantial reduction in how much they receive for treating Medicare patients. The changes in the reimbursement calculations are the most significant since 1983.

Hundreds of lawmakers also protested the proposed changes and asked the Bush administration to delay the most significant ones for a year. Federal officials said they will phase in changes to the reimbursement formula over a 3-year period.

Under the new system, the flat rate that Medicare pays for a particular service will be calculated on that cost, rather than on a list price that overstates costs for some services.

"We want to get the payments right, so each patient gets appropriate care," McClellan said.

The trade group representing the large majority of hospitals said the regulations announced Tuesday afternoon after the stock markets closed are an improvement from what the administration had proposed in the spring.

"This is a significant regulation, and we will review the details in the coming days," said Rick Pollack, executive vice president of the American Hospital Association. Pollack said that 40% of America's hospitals are reimbursed less than

the cost of delivering services to hospitalized Medicare inpatients.

"It's essential to build a more equitable and accurate payment system that allows hospitals to continue to serve their communities," Pollack said.

The federal government spends \$125 billion a year reimbursing 5,000 hospitals for the care provided to Medicare patients.

McClellan said more than 80% of hospitals can expect increases of between 1% and 5% in their reimbursements. About 2% of hospitals can expect to see a reduction in their reimbursement.

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.

MIRS – August 3, 2006

Governors To Focus On Health Care

The 98th Annual Meeting of the National Governors Association (NGA) this weekend will focus on health care related issues.

The nation's governors will gather Saturday and Sunday in downtown Charleston, S.C. to hear from a number of speakers and discuss a number of health care related topics. The meeting marks the end of the tenure of Arkansas Gov. Mike **HUCKABEE** as chairman of the group.

Throughout his tenure, Huckabee has promoted issues relating to getting America into better shape through a more active lifestyle. On Saturday, the governor's will:

- Hear from Tommy **THOMPSON**, former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and former Wisconsin governor, about transforming the U.S. health care system



Springport man arrested after allegedly pointing gun at wife

Friday, August 04, 2006

Staff report

A Springport man could face charges of felonious assault and child endangerment after he allegedly pointed a gun at his wife during a heated argument.

Jackson County Sheriff's Deputy Dan Deering responded to a complaint at 7:45 a.m. Thursday and located the alleged victim in her driveway in the 7000 block of Springport Road.

She said her husband had smashed furniture and pointed a .22-caliber rifle at her head.

Deering arrested the man without incident, Undersheriff Thomas Finco said. Family Independence Agency workers were called in to interview the couple's two young children, who were at home at the time of the incident.

©2006 Jackson Citizen Patriot

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

Aug 4, 12:59 PM EDT

Vt. weighs in on lesbian custody fight

By ROSS SNEYD
Associated Press Writer

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) -- The state Supreme Court ruled Friday that Vermont courts, and not those in Virginia, have exclusive jurisdiction over a case involving two women battling for custody of a child they had while they were in a lesbian relationship.

The unanimous ruling conflicts with a series of decisions in Virginia, where courts ruled the state's anti-gay marriage laws controlled the case.

Justice John Dooley wrote that Vermont civil union laws govern the women's 2003 separation and subsequent child custody disagreement because they were legally joined in a civil union there in 2000.

"This is a straightforward interstate jurisdictional dispute over custody, and the governing law fully supports the Vermont court's decision to exercise jurisdiction and refuse to follow the conflicting Virginia visitation order," Dooley wrote.

Vermont became the first state in the nation to recognize same-sex couples' relationships in 2000, enacting a civil union law. Connecticut is the only other state with such a law and whether such relationships would be recognized in other states has been a matter of litigation.

Lisa and Janet Miller-Jenkins were Virginia residents in 2000 when they traveled to Vermont to join in a civil union. Lisa Miller-Jenkins conceived a child through artificial insemination while the couple was together, and they eventually moved to Vermont.

About a year later, Lisa Miller-Jenkins renounced her homosexuality, returned to Virginia and denied Janet Miller-Jenkins' demands for visitation rights. They were granted a dissolution of their civil union and Lisa Miller-Jenkins filed for full custody.

A Vermont Family Court judge gave Janet Miller-Jenkins temporary visitation, prompting Lisa Miller-Jenkins to file for full custody in Virginia courts.

The Vermont Supreme Court ruled in favor of Janet Miller-Jenkins on the visitation dispute. The court also upheld a decision by Vermont Family Court refusing to abide by a Virginia decision giving Lisa Miller-Jenkins full custody, and a contempt order against her for failing to abide by the Vermont visitation order.

A lawyer representing opponents of same-sex marriage said the dispute undoubtedly will have to be resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court.

"It's a classic conflict between two states over same-sex unions," said Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, which is representing Lisa Miller-Jenkins, one of the women in the dispute. "The real question there is whether or not a state can have its own policy that does not accept same-sex unions or whether they have to accept the union of another state."

© 2006 The Associated Press.



Minnesota couple take over

Friday, August 04, 2006

By Paul Overeiner

povereiner@citpat.com -- 768-4917

A Minnesota couple, Majors John and Linda Mallett, have been named to lead Salvation Army operations in Jackson.

Both officers had been stationed in The Salvation Army's Indiana Division. They will take over for Capt. George Gibbons, who was transferred to LaPorte, Ind. John Mallett said the Salvation Army typically announces new assignments in June; the Malletts arrived in Jackson near the end of that month.

"Jackson is a really nice community," he said today.

The Malletts will divide their duties and preaching responsibilities for morning and evening worship services.

John Mallett will focus on the business and financial end of the mission. His wife will concentrate on ladies' ministries, youth programs and other services.

The biggest challenge will be to secure money for a number of programs following a funding cut by the United Way. Mallett said United Way support has dropped from around \$141,000 to \$50,000 this year, with the reductions falling on emergency services and youth programs.

"The way the economy is right now ! we're going to have to find funding for that," he said.

Mallett said outreach efforts will be directed at foundations, the Army's traditional donor base and others.

"We're going to have to put a major funding program in place and get the community involved," he said.

John Mallett is a native of Duluth; Linda Mallett is a native of St. Paul.

©2006 Jackson Citizen Patriot

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

A SUMMER COURSE: Kids savor shot at learning golf

Detroit programs teach game and life skills

BY MARISOL BELLO

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

August 4, 2006

While Tiger Woods was tuning up Wednesday for the Buick Open at Warwick Hills Golf and Country Club, 11-year-old Deandre Blackman and his fellow student golfers toiled under a hot sun in Detroit's River Rouge Park, learning the fine points of a full swing.

Deandre, who lives on Detroit's west side, said he has been taking lessons for three years, ever since he saw the winner of a golf tournament on television holding a huge trophy in the air.

"I wanted a trophy like that," he said.

And thanks to outings like this one offered by the First Tee, a national program with a Detroit chapter that teaches youngsters to play, Deandre is dreaming big. He wants to become a golf pro himself.

"They make a lot of money," he said.

Across Detroit, a handful of programs are bringing the game from the country clubs to the inner city, teaching hundreds of young people how to drive, chip and putt. They learn the differences among irons and wedges and when it's best to use them.

But beyond the details of the game, the programs aim to teach the students to apply the qualities they need to play -- concentration, patience and determination -- to their everyday lives. At the First Tee, where the students are from



Kaitlyn Kipp, 7, of Detroit gets pointers on her swing from instructor Julia Baldwin during a session with the First Tee program Thursday at River Rouge Park in Detroit. Kaitlyn says she prefers a driver. Several programs are available to kids who want to play. (ROB WIDDIS/Special to the Free Press)

A program sampler

To enroll your child or donate:

Midnight Golf: 313-863-0463. The program serves young adults 17 to 22 years old.

The First Tee: 248-545-4929. It serves youngsters 7-17 throughout metro

7 to 17 years old, they take classes on everything from properly introducing themselves to dress codes.

Detroit.

Other programs, such as Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's Mayor's Time and Think Detroit PAL, offer lessons to youngsters ranging from 3 to 18.

Think Detroit PAL: 313-833-1600, or through instructor Lindsey Mason III at 313-633-5904. The program is for those 7-18.

Another program, Midnight Golf, fashioned after the popular Midnight Basketball program, has grown from 17 people five years ago to almost 90 today, with a waiting list that reaches several hundred. The program works with young adults from 17 to 22.

Mayor's Time: 313-633-5904, through Mason. This program is for children 3-15.

The popularity of golf among young people in Detroit, like everywhere else around the country, has grown in the decade or so since Woods has been on the pro circuit. Woods also has contributed to the game's popularity by holding clinics with inner-city children. He held one in Detroit eight years ago at Palmer Park during a Buick Open visit.

Leader board

Woods has donated millions of dollars to youth education and training through his Tiger Woods Foundation.

Leaders after the first round of the Women's British Open:

"Since Tiger Woods came on the scene, I've seen the game grow 100%; it's just a matter of finances," said Lindsey Mason III, a dean of Detroit golf instructors, who teaches for the Mayor's Time and Think Detroit PAL programs.

Juli Inkster...30-36--66

On Wednesday, a handful of children practiced on the driving range at River Rouge Park under the tutelage of Julia Baldwin, who broke down the basics of the full swing.

Silvia Cavalleri...34-35--69

For sisters Kaitlyn Kipp, 7, and Kayla, 10, of Detroit, it was their second lesson since their dad signed them up with the First Tee.

Maria Hjorth...32-37--69

Kaitlyn was clearly into the game, cheering for her sister and the others whenever they hit the ball. And Kaitlyn already has a favorite club -- the driver.

Allison Hanna...33-37--70

"It's the biggest!" she squealed.

Nina Reis...36-34--70

Contact **MARISOL BELLO** at 313-222-6678 or bello@freepress.com.

Gwladys Nocera...34-36--70

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.

OTHER NOTABLES

Cristie Kerr...35-36--
71

Natalie Gulbis...33-
39--72

Annika
Sorenstam...33-39--
72

Paula Creamer...35-
37--72

Michelle Wie...37-
37--74

Wage Bill Dies; Senate Backs Pension Shift

By [CARL HULSE](#)
The New York Times

Published: August 4, 2006

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 — Senate [Democrats](#) on Thursday blocked legislation tying the first minimum wage increase in almost a decade to a decrease in the federal estate tax, denying [Republicans](#) a legislative victory as lawmakers head into a crucial month of campaigning before the November elections.

Republican backers of the measure, dubbed the trifecta for its three chief elements, fell 4 votes short of the 60 needed to cut off debate. Democrats had argued that it was a bad bargain to exchange a \$2.10 wage increase for struggling workers for a costly tax cut for the country's wealthiest families.

"This trifecta is a high-stakes gamble with America's future," said Senator Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the Senate's No. 2 Democrat. "This is the worst special-interest bill I have seen in my time in Congress."

Scrambling to complete its business and join the House in an August recess, the Senate also approved and sent to the president a major overhaul of pension law as Republicans sought to record some last-minute accomplishments.

But the failure of the bill linking the wage increase and the tax cut was a significant defeat for Senator [Bill Frist](#), the majority leader entering his last months in the post. Mr. Frist had hoped to steer the measure through the Senate, partly with the help of an accompanying series of tax incentives and federal aid to woo lawmakers.

Mr. Frist and his allies in business viewed the wage increase, stretched over three years, as an acceptable trade-off for a permanent reduction in the estate tax and \$38 billion in tax breaks and federal aid that constituted the third part of the measure. But they could not overcome intense opposition from Democrats and organized labor.

Republicans said Democrats were choosing partisanship over policy and were stalling the measure to allow them to attack the record of the Republican-led Congress.

“It is an excuse to make it a do-nothing Congress,” Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, Republican of Texas, said. “And we are turning our back on the middle-class and poor people in this country who depend on the minimum wage and death-tax relief.”

Republicans said the legislation represented the best opportunity to advance an increase in the minimum wage that Democrats have been advocating for years, and some predicted the Democratic opposition could boomerang. Republicans said the proposal balanced the interests of both workers and employers.

“I have never understood the belief of some that you can love employees and hate employers, but that seems to be what’s driving this,” said Senator [Gordon H. Smith](#), Republican of Oregon.

Democrats said voters would see through the Republican tactic and be turned off by the Republican effort to win a major tax break for some of America’s richest families in exchange for raising the minimum wage to \$7.25.

“The public has a pretty good nose for tricks and games,” said Senator [Charles E. Schumer](#) of New York, chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. “And they’re smelling it.”

The opposition was aided by a dispute over a provision that would allow employers in a handful of states to begin counting employee tips against minimum wage increases, an approach Democrats said could end up cutting the pay of some workers. Republicans disputed that contention, but the prospect was enough to deter some Democrats Republicans had hoped would vote for the bill.

“Cutting the salaries of Washington tip workers by more than \$5 an hour is horrible,” said Senator Maria Cantwell, Democrat of Washington, who called the legislation “a cynical ploy on the part of the Republican leadership in an election year.”

Under the estate tax proposal, the amount of an individual’s estate that would be exempt from taxes would rise to \$5 million by 2015, with \$10 million exempt for a couple.

After the vote, Mr. Frist noted that the major provisions of the measure — the wage increase, the estate tax reduction and the package of tax breaks — all enjoyed majority Senate support yet could not clear the procedural hurdles.

Mr. Frist again declared that the minimum wage rise could only be considered in tandem with the others. “As I’ve said before, these issues must be addressed as a package all or nothing,” he said.

Despite Mr. Frist’s vow to let the wage increase die, Senator [Harry Reid](#) of Nevada, the Democratic leader, said Democrats would hold the Senate in session this fall if there were not a second vote. “If he is serious about that threat, I hope he knows he has a fight on his hands,” Mr. Reid said.

Four Democrats joined 52 Republicans in the vote, while 38 Democrats, one independent and three Republicans opposed the bill, including Mr. Frist, who voted with the opponents for procedural reasons.

Democrats voting to move ahead with the measure were Senators [Robert C. Byrd](#) of West Virginia, Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, Ben Nelson of Nebraska and Bill Nelson of Florida. In addition to Mr. Frist, Republicans who joined Democrats were [Lincoln Chafee](#) of Rhode Island and George V. Voinovich of Ohio.

The estate tax change would cost the government an estimated \$268 billion in revenue over the next 10 years. Democrats say the future costs are much larger.

|

Congressional Republicans have for years refused to consider an increase in the current minimum wage, \$5.15 per hour. But the House leadership relented last week in the face of appeals from moderate Republicans who said they needed to act on the minimum wage to defuse intensifying attacks from Democrats and labor organizations.

The measure combining the wage increase, estate tax cut and tax incentives was approved by the House early Saturday morning.

Mr. Schumer and his House counterpart, Rahm Emanuel of Illinois, predicted Thursday that the minimum wage would remain a top issue in the fall campaigns. Republicans were trying to turn the vote to their advantage as well.

The pension legislation, approved on a 93-to-5 vote, is intended to shore up the federal insurance system and better secure the retirement benefits of millions of American workers by requiring some companies to increase their contributions to shaky plans. The complex bill has been years in the making.

“Too many workers have seen their pensions fail in recent years,” said Senator [Edward M. Kennedy](#), Democrat of Massachusetts, an author of the measure.

The bill requires companies with pension funds to close any shortfalls within seven years. It also has tests that companies would have to use to determine whether their pension plans posed a risk to the federal insurance system. Companies with such risky plans would then have to calculate how much it would cost if all qualifying employees were to take early retirement immediately and then put that amount into their pension funds.

The bill also closes loopholes that made it easy for companies to avoid paying their full premiums to the pension insurance system.

The pension and tax votes concluded a complicated legislative chess match that began last week when Republican leaders decided to remove the package of tax breaks from the pension legislation and add them to the bill with the wage increase and estate tax change. That move rankled some Republicans, who warned that the strategy was a long shot.

“The bottom line is, we bet on the wrong horses,” said Senator [Charles E. Grassley](#), Republican of Iowa and chairman of the Finance Committee.

Wage Bill Dies; Senate Backs Pension Shift

By [CARL HULSE](#)
The New York Times

Published: August 4, 2006

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 — Senate [Democrats](#) on Thursday blocked legislation tying the first minimum wage increase in almost a decade to a decrease in the federal estate tax, denying [Republicans](#) a legislative victory as lawmakers head into a crucial month of campaigning before the November elections.

Republican backers of the measure, dubbed the trifecta for its three chief elements, fell 4 votes short of the 60 needed to cut off debate. Democrats had argued that it was a bad bargain to exchange a \$2.10 wage increase for struggling workers for a costly tax cut for the country's wealthiest families.

"This trifecta is a high-stakes gamble with America's future," said Senator Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the Senate's No. 2 Democrat. "This is the worst special-interest bill I have seen in my time in Congress."

Scrambling to complete its business and join the House in an August recess, the Senate also approved and sent to the president a major overhaul of pension law as Republicans sought to record some last-minute accomplishments.

But the failure of the bill linking the wage increase and the tax cut was a significant defeat for Senator [Bill Frist](#), the majority leader entering his last months in the post. Mr. Frist had hoped to steer the measure through the Senate, partly with the help of an accompanying series of tax incentives and federal aid to woo lawmakers.

Mr. Frist and his allies in business viewed the wage increase, stretched over three years, as an acceptable trade-off for a permanent reduction in the estate tax and \$38 billion in tax breaks and federal aid that constituted the third part of the measure. But they could not overcome intense opposition from Democrats and organized labor.

Republicans said Democrats were choosing partisanship over policy and were stalling the measure to allow them to attack the record of the Republican-led Congress.

“It is an excuse to make it a do-nothing Congress,” Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, Republican of Texas, said. “And we are turning our back on the middle-class and poor people in this country who depend on the minimum wage and death-tax relief.”

Republicans said the legislation represented the best opportunity to advance an increase in the minimum wage that Democrats have been advocating for years, and some predicted the Democratic opposition could boomerang. Republicans said the proposal balanced the interests of both workers and employers.

“I have never understood the belief of some that you can love employees and hate employers, but that seems to be what’s driving this,” said Senator [Gordon H. Smith](#), Republican of Oregon.

Democrats said voters would see through the Republican tactic and be turned off by the Republican effort to win a major tax break for some of America’s richest families in exchange for raising the minimum wage to \$7.25.

“The public has a pretty good nose for tricks and games,” said Senator [Charles E. Schumer](#) of New York, chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. “And they’re smelling it.”

The opposition was aided by a dispute over a provision that would allow employers in a handful of states to begin counting employee tips against minimum wage increases, an approach Democrats said could end up cutting the pay of some workers. Republicans disputed that contention, but the prospect was enough to deter some Democrats Republicans had hoped would vote for the bill.

“Cutting the salaries of Washington tip workers by more than \$5 an hour is horrible,” said Senator Maria Cantwell, Democrat of Washington, who called the legislation “a cynical ploy on the part of the Republican leadership in an election year.”

Under the estate tax proposal, the amount of an individual’s estate that would be exempt from taxes would rise to \$5 million by 2015, with \$10 million exempt for a couple.

After the vote, Mr. Frist noted that the major provisions of the measure — the wage increase, the estate tax reduction and the package of tax breaks — all enjoyed majority Senate support yet could not clear the procedural hurdles.

Mr. Frist again declared that the minimum wage rise could only be considered in tandem with the others. “As I’ve said before, these issues must be addressed as a package all or nothing,” he said.

Despite Mr. Frist’s vow to let the wage increase die, Senator [Harry Reid](#) of Nevada, the Democratic leader, said Democrats would hold the Senate in session this fall if there were not a second vote. “If he is serious about that threat, I hope he knows he has a fight on his hands,” Mr. Reid said.

Four Democrats joined 52 Republicans in the vote, while 38 Democrats, one independent and three Republicans opposed the bill, including Mr. Frist, who voted with the opponents for procedural reasons.

Democrats voting to move ahead with the measure were Senators [Robert C. Byrd](#) of West Virginia, Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, Ben Nelson of Nebraska and Bill Nelson of Florida. In addition to Mr. Frist, Republicans who joined Democrats were [Lincoln Chafee](#) of Rhode Island and George V. Voinovich of Ohio.

The estate tax change would cost the government an estimated \$268 billion in revenue over the next 10 years. Democrats say the future costs are much larger.

|

Minimum Wage, Estate Tax Bill Dead For Now

Senate Republicans Failed To Get Required 60 Votes

POSTED: 12:33 am EDT August 4, 2006

UPDATED: 7:51 am EDT August 4, 2006

CAPITOL HILL -- A proposal to combine a minimum-wage increase with a break in the so-called death tax is dead for now.

But the issue could come up in the Senate again this fall, thanks to a maneuver by Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn.

The Senate on Thursday night failed to get the 60 votes necessary to approve a bill fusing the tax cut for multimillion-dollar estates, with a \$2.10 minimum wage increase spread over three years. The current \$5.15 minimum hasn't changed in a decade.

When it was clear the measure wouldn't pass, Frist switched his vote from "yes" to "no" in a maneuver preserving his right to bring the bill up for debate again this fall.

Already passed by the House, the proposal fell four votes short in the Senate.

For Republicans, the legislation could have diluted a campaign issue for Democrats.

Republicans also know the estate tax may have an uncertain future if they lose seats in the November elections.

Most Democrats criticized Republicans for trying to use a wage increase to deliver a tax cut to the rich.

The GOP strategy put Democrats in an uncomfortable position.

Either they could vote against the bill, thus rejecting a minimum wage increase, or they could vote for it and approve tax cuts for a select group of wealthy people.

Most rejected the bill.

Minimum Wage, Estate Tax Bill Dead For Now

Senate Republicans Failed To Get Required 60 Votes

POSTED: 12:33 am EDT August 4, 2006

UPDATED: 7:51 am EDT August 4, 2006

CAPITOL HILL -- A proposal to combine a minimum-wage increase with a break in the so-called death tax is dead for now.

But the issue could come up in the Senate again this fall, thanks to a maneuver by Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn.

The Senate on Thursday night failed to get the 60 votes necessary to approve a bill fusing the tax cut for multimillion-dollar estates, with a \$2.10 minimum wage increase spread over three years. The current \$5.15 minimum hasn't changed in a decade.

When it was clear the measure wouldn't pass, Frist switched his vote from "yes" to "no" in a maneuver preserving his right to bring the bill up for debate again this fall.

Already passed by the House, the proposal fell four votes short in the Senate.

For Republicans, the legislation could have diluted a campaign issue for Democrats.

Republicans also know the estate tax may have an uncertain future if they lose seats in the November elections.

Most Democrats criticized Republicans for trying to use a wage increase to deliver a tax cut to the rich.

The GOP strategy put Democrats in an uncomfortable position.

Either they could vote against the bill, thus rejecting a minimum wage increase, or they could vote for it and approve tax cuts for a select group of wealthy people.

Most rejected the bill.

Fair Wages

Minimum hike had too many flaws

August 4, 2006

As important as it is to raise the minimum wage nationwide, the federal bill to accomplish it had too many poison pills. The Senate, working late into Thursday night, properly rejected the bill on a 56-42 vote, four votes short of succeeding.

Most famously, the minimum wage hike was packaged with a huge estate tax cut that would benefit the top 0.3% of estates, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. It's not referred to as the Paris Hilton Relief Act for nothing.

But even the proposed minimum wage hike had drawbacks. It would have preempted state laws that require the full minimum rate for tipped workers. Michigan doesn't do that, but seven states do, and it's rude for Congress to think it can ride roughshod over them this way. Some analysts believe workers in those states could have faced actual wage cuts, a most unwelcome side effect of a bill intended to lift the prospects of families nationwide.

As proposed, the federal minimum wage would have moved from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour in steps over three years. Michigan's new minimum wage of \$6.95, which takes effect Oct. 1, would still be higher for most of that period. Several other states also have higher minimum wages, and voters in at least four states will decide in November whether to enact increases. Although nationwide uniformity is preferable, the fact that many states are taking action on their own made this bill as much a political vehicle as a claim to fairness.

Other downsides to the bill included special allocations designed specifically to win votes: a timber program targeted at Washington state, coal mine cleanups aimed at West Virginia, a bonding program in Arkansas. As worthy as these programs may be, it's depressing to watch them being doled out simply because those states' senators were wavering on how to vote.

The final inducement was renewal of some tax breaks that almost everyone agrees are important, such as one designed to stimulate research. But since they are popular, they would have worked in almost any context -- and surely didn't need to be attached to a bill with as many sticking points as this one.

Overtime mistake could cost jobs

August 4, 2006

Overtime doesn't matter much if you lose your job or take a cut in your base pay.

That's the reality Gov. Jennifer Granholm has to confront, and soon, in dealing with a bill to fix a legislative mistake that made tens of thousands of Michigan workers eligible for overtime pay. The provision was in a hastily passed law to raise the \$5.15-an-hour state minimum wage effective Oct. 1.

Republicans, who control the Legislature, engineered the bill to take a populist issue away from Democrats in this election year. But in the process they unwittingly -- and carelessly -- repealed an overtime exemption for 12 classes of workers, including sales people and mechanics at auto and boat dealerships, truckers and long-haul bus drivers, live-in baby-sitters, movie theater employees and people who work at small newspapers and radio and TV stations.

Some of those occupations include commissions, payment by the job, considerable "down time," etc. But regardless of what led to the exemptions, if they are erased, the employers involved are likely to adjust pay scales or schedules, or lay off some people to hold down costs. And they will soon need to start adjusting their payroll computers and budgets accordingly.

The Legislature has a bill ready to correct its mistake, but there's no point in passing it if Granholm won't sign it. With one eye on her union support, Democrat Granholm lauded the overtime change ex post facto as the right thing to do, even though it never came up in debate or in her radio address after she signed the minimum-wage bill. The governor is apparently wary of taking away what some workers might see as a plus, even if others regard it as a threat.

The point is, the Legislature screwed up. There will be costs attached for employers and some job losses unless it is fixed. As a general rule, people who work extra hours ought to be compensated. But these exemptions were enacted for specific reasons, and any repeals ought to be debated on their own merits, not slipped through in a law of unintended consequences.

If the governor wants them to remain in place anyway as of Oct. 1, then she needs to declare that soon so the folks paying the wages can begin to do what they will need to do to adjust.